



PREVENTION OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE BIG SKY

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ATTENDING SCHOOL AND DAYCARE IN MONTANA

In order to protect the health of children in schools and in daycare centers, immunization requirements have been established. The first school entry immunization requirement in Montana was enacted in 1980 and required vaccination for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTP), polio (OPV), measles and rubella. This issue of *Montana Public Health* describes the current school and daycare immunization requirements.

Why require immunizations for school attendance? School immunization laws have been an essential part of the control strategy for vaccine-preventable diseases in the U.S.⁽¹⁾ During the last half of the 20th C. vaccines and effective vaccine delivery strategies reduced the incidence of eight vaccine-preventable diseases of childhood by 97% or more. The Supreme Court upheld the right of states to require vaccination for school entry in 1922. (The vaccination in question then was for smallpox, a disease entirely eradicated later in the century.) School immunization laws help establish the priority that states give to disease-preventing, life-saving vaccinations. The vast majority of persons in the U.S. and in Montana support this approach to disease control.

Which immunizations are required for entry into kindergarten or grade 1? Before a student enters kindergarten or grade 1 in a public school or private school in Montana, documentation that the student has received the following vaccines is required: **polio** (3 doses with at least one dose after the student's 4th birthday); diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis, **DTaP** (4 doses with at least one dose after the student's 4th birthday); and measles, mumps, rubella, **MMR** (2 doses).

Which immunizations are required for entry into grade 7? Before a student enters grade 7 in a public or private school in Montana, documentation that the student has received the following vaccines is required: **MMR** (2 doses); tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis, **Tdap**, or tetanus, diphtheria, **Td** (a booster dose if 5 or

more years have elapsed since the student's previous dose of DTaP, DT or Td).

Are there any immunizations beyond the required ones recommended for students in grades 1-12? Yes. In accordance with recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)⁽²⁾, DPHHS recommends that all students in grades 1-12 should have received varicella vaccine and vaccination against both hepatitis A and hepatitis B. Furthermore, girls aged 11 years or older should have received the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine which can be administered to girls as young as 9 years.

Which immunizations are required for attendance at licensed or registered child daycare facilities? For a child to attend a licensed or registered daycare facility in Montana documentation that the child has received the following vaccines appropriate to the child's age is required: **DTaP**; polio (**IPV**); **Haemophilus influenzae** type b (**Hib**); **MMR**; and varicella (**Var**).

Are any additional immunizations recommended for children in daycare facilities? Yes. In accordance with ACIP recommendations⁽²⁾, DPHHS recommends that all children in daycare facilities should have received age-appropriate vaccination against hepatitis A, hepatitis B, pneumococcal disease (PCV), rotavirus and seasonal influenza.

Are exemptions from these requirements possible? In the rare instance of a medical risk from exposure to these vaccines, a child in

daycare or school may be exempted by a physician-signed medical exemption. In schools, a religious exemption requiring an annual notarized statement from parent or guardian can exempt a child from vaccination requirements. In daycare facilities, a religious exemption can exempt a child from the Hib vaccination requirement.

Is assistance available to help pay for immunizations for children? The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program provides free vaccine to

VFC-enrolled health care providers for children birth through age 18 who: are enrolled in Medicaid, have no health insurance, or are American Indian or Alaska Native. In addition, underinsured children are eligible to receive VFC vaccine from Federally Qualified Health Centers or Rural Health Clinics. In Montana, underinsured children are eligible to receive free vaccine at a local health department except for HPV vaccine. Providers may charge an administration fee⁽³⁾.

Immunizations required for school entry or daycare attendance, 2007			
Immunization	Daycare	Kindergarten or Grade 1	Grade 7
Polio (IPV)	Age appropriate	3 doses (at least 1 dose after 4 th birthday)	3 doses (at least 1 dose after 4 th birthday)
DTaP, DT, Td	Age appropriate	4 doses (at least 1 dose after 4 th birthday)	See Tdap, Td below ↓
Tdap, Td booster	Not required	Not required	1 dose if ≥ 5 years since last Td-containing vaccine
MMR	1 dose on or after 1 st birthday	2 doses	2 doses
<i>H. influenzae</i> type b	Age appropriate	Not required	Not required
Varicella	1 dose between 12 and 19 months	Recommended, not required	Recommended, not required

For more information about immunization requirements in Montana contact Joyce Burgett at 406-444-5580 or see www.dphhs.mt.gov/PHSD/Immunization/immune-resource.shtml

References:

1. Orenstein WA, Hinman AR. The immunization system in the United States—the role of school immunization laws. *Vaccine* 1999;17:S19-S24.
2. <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/acip/default.htm>
3. CDC. 2007 Vaccines for children program operations guide, Atlanta, GA, 2007.

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